CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
Centennial Commons 7210 Olive Blvd.
Wednesday, March 11th 2026, 6:00 P.M.

AGENDA

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- January 14th 2026

E. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

F. DEPARTMENT REPORT

G. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Approve 2025 Forestry Commission Report
b. Arbor Day Plans Confirmed April 3rd 8:30am-10:30am.
c. Update on County trees

I. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review draft letter to residents with available street tree sites
b. Election of officers

J. COMMISSION COMMENTS

K. NEXT MEETING DATE

a. Scheduled for May 13th

L. ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
Wednesday January 14, 2026
(DRAFT)

Agenda Item A: Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm.

Agenda Item B: Roll Call

Those in attendance included Commission President Timothy Schroeder, Vice President Dana Barnard, Secretary Roger McFarland, and Commission Members Kathy Freese, Linda Freid, Theadore Smith. Jacob Kaiser Forestry Supervisor and City Council Member Lisa Brenner were also in attendance.

Agenda Item C: Approval of Agenda

Donna Barnard motioned to accept the agenda. Kathy Freeze seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D: Approval of Minutes

Donna Barnard motioned to accept the November 12, 2025, meeting minutes. Theadore Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item E: Citizens' Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Agenda Item F: Department Report

One crane truck is now back in operation. The crew has been working on stumps. A new hire is working out well and their probation time will be up in March.

November and December Monthly Reports were submitted.

It was reported that planting is not keeping up with removals. Tree removals counts are skewed by small tree removals.

A water truck should be in the budget with a likely spring delivery.

Agenda Item G: Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison, Lisa Brenner, reported that the Pershing Ave. project is moving along quickly. The idea of getting rid of Sweet Gums as street trees was discussed. Also, since buyout of lots go back to the city these could be considered for planting of trees. Apartments at the Royal Bank area will be removed and make a large area available for planting.

Agenda Item H: Unfinished Business

Friday April 3, 2026, was discussed as a target day to celebrate Arbor Day. Tim reported that he approached the Director of Ecoact, a group that works with the Missouri Botanical Garden, but got no response. He will follow up.

Jacob said he would select trees for the location. Tim suggested we select five types and discuss why each species is appropriate.

Donna suggested we seek media attention. Tim specifically suggested TV networks.

It was stated that the County does not want sidewalk trees. Ryan Pierce of St. Louis County separately stated that a right of way for University City to plant trees would require the compete take over of all aspects of the right of way.

Agenda Item I: New Business

Nominations of officers was delayed until the March meeting.

The idea of Tree Champions was introduced. The idea would be to create tree walks. It was noted University City in Bloom has a map but, it needs updating.

The Annual Forestry Report was discussed. Updates will be included in a revised Power Point Show. It was agreed to add 2024 and 2025 tree counts.

It was noted that Vacant Sites went from 462 to 795, a significant loss of progress!

Agenda Item J: Commission Comments

There were no Commission Comments.

Agenda Item K: Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be on March 11, 2026, at 6:00pm.

Agenda Item #12: Adjournment

Roger McFarland motioned to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Kathy Freeze. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Dear University City Resident,

The Forestry Division has identified your home as an address where a tree has been removed in the past and a new tree has not been planted. The purpose of this letter is to ask you if you would like the City to plant a tree in the right of way in front of or on the side of your home. This service would be provided by the City and would be no cost to the homeowner. If you would like a tree planted, please let the Forestry Division know by sending an email to jkaiser@ucitymo.org or calling at 314-505-8619. Your address will be added to the planting list, and a new tree will be planted in the spring or fall this year. To ensure their survival, the trees that will be planted will require you to water them on a weekly basis for the first three years. Thank you for helping the City expand and care for the urban tree canopy.

Sincerely,

Jacob Kaiser

City Forester

To: Todd Strubhart; Urban Forestry Commission
From: Jacob Kaiser

Date: 3/10/2026

Subject: **JANURARY FORESTRY REPORT**

Removed 3 trees, 16 man-hours were spent on removals.

Removed 15 Stubs, 120 man-hours spent of stubs

Pruned 66 trees, 128 man-hours spent on pruning

Related forestry work:

- 6 Loads of woodchips were taken to Heman Park.
- 4 Loads of sweepings of bark and twigs were taken to recycle area in Ruth Park.
- 16 Load of logs on the crane truck taken to Heman Park.

Comments:

To: Todd Strubhart; Urban Forestry Commission
From: Jacob Kaiser

Date: 3/10/2026

Subject: **FEBRUARY FORESTRY REPORT**

Removed 13 trees, 200 man-hours were spent on removals.

Pruned 1 trees, 24 man-hours spent on pruning.

Removed 32 stubs, 168 man-hours spent on stubs

Related forestry work:

- 8 Loads of woodchips were taken to Heman Park.
- 10 Loads of sweepings of bark and twigs were taken to recycle area in Ruth Park.
- 31 Load of logs on the crane truck taken to Heman Park.

Comments:

Forestry Commission Report 2025

December, 2025

Overview

- This is the second year that the Forestry Commission will report on the health of the University City urban forest.
- The following slides are updated with another year's information on each of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. Canopy Coverage
2. Numbers of trees
3. Number of trees pruned, planted or removed
4. Tree species diversity
5. Tree size class distribution
6. Percentage of contract versus in-house work
7. State / County tree management
8. New planting areas established
9. Resident communication

The indicators measure areas of achievement and areas for improvement.

Canopy Coverage

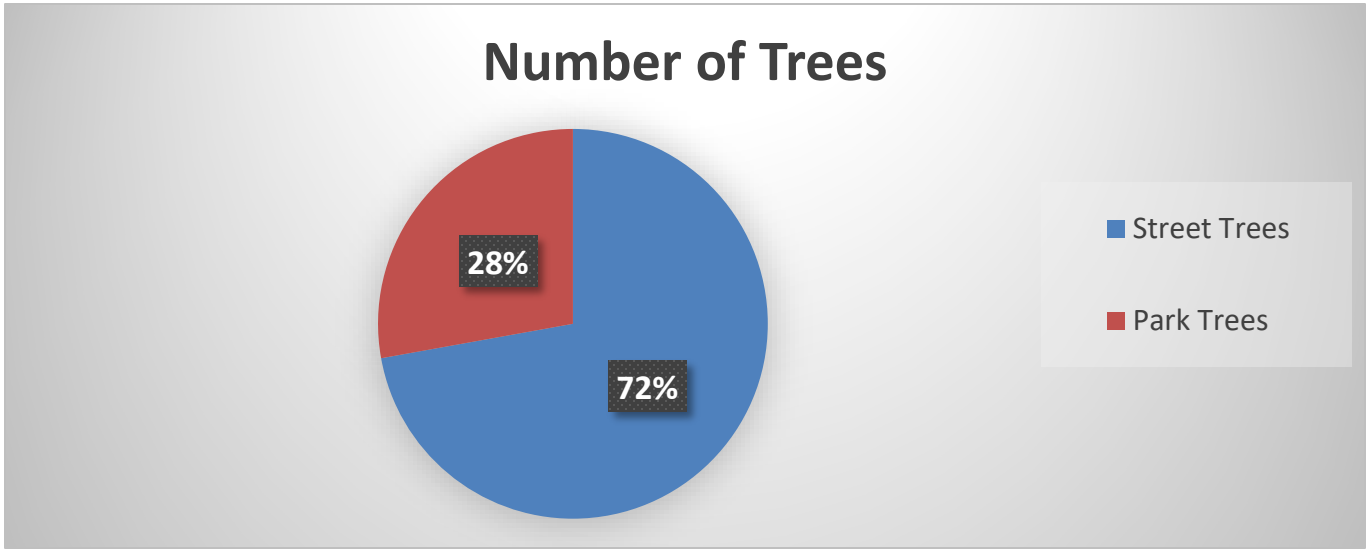
The goal of tree coverage supported by the National Forestry Service is 40%.

The Forestry Commission used the “I-Tree Canopy” tool to estimate the actual Canopy Coverage of University City is approximately 37%.

This information is not likely to change annually. It will be updated again in 2030 or if a major event occurs which warrants earlier analysis.

Canopy coverage is a collaborative effort between the city and the residents.

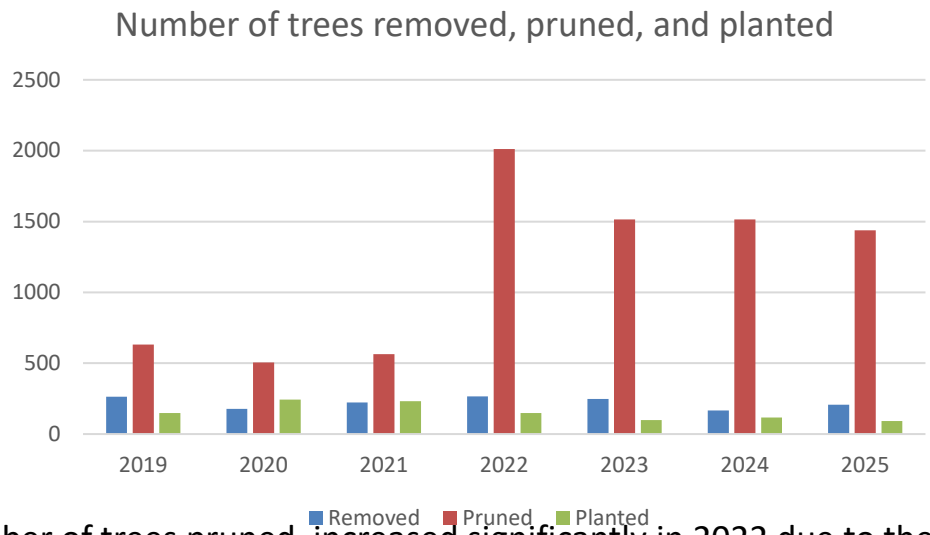
Number of Trees Maintained by Forestry



- 7,302 Street Trees
- 2,903 Park Trees (excludes Ruth Woods)

The current Forestry Department Staff oversees approximately 5000 trees per person.

Number of trees removed, pruned, and planted

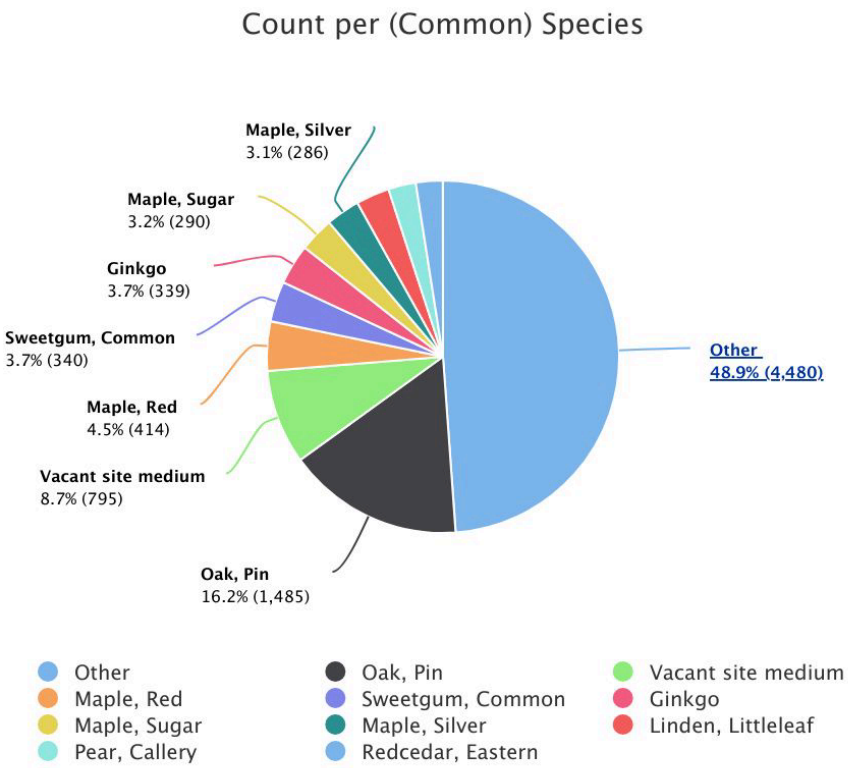


Number of trees pruned increased significantly in 2022 due to the addition of an annual pruning cycle.

- Pruning cycle is being done entirely by contractors.
- Planting is being done by in-house staff and has gone down due to being overwhelmed by storm cleanup and keeping up with removals.
- Removals are staying consistent with the allocation of more money for contractors.

The number of new trees planted has remained about the same over the last four years and is not keeping pace with needs.

Street tree species diversity



- 170 Different tree species managed on the streets

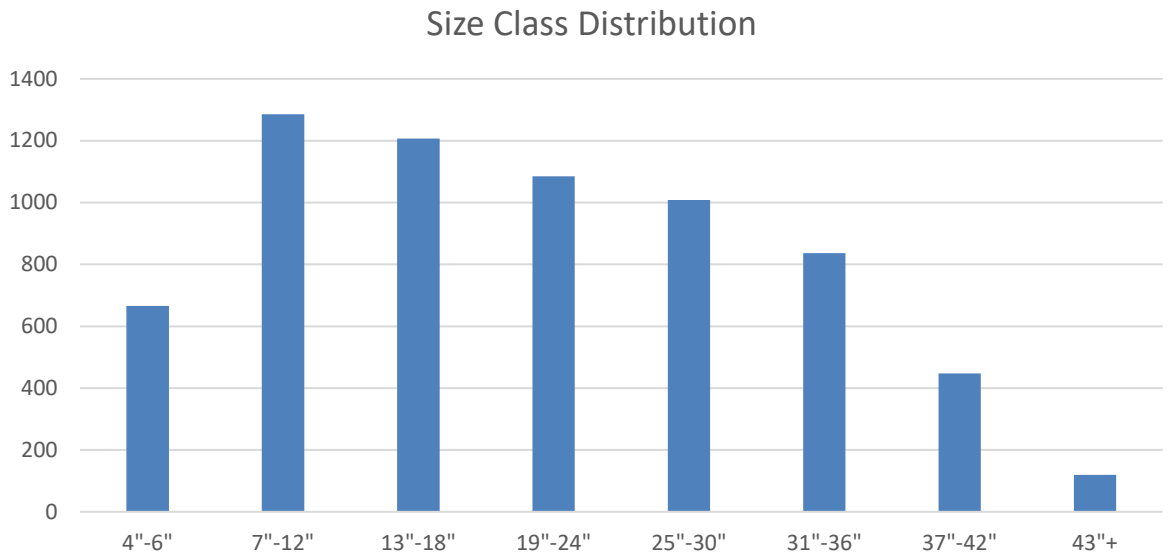
  Pin Oak is the number one species by count with 16% total

  Vacant sites are the next most prevalent

  Industry standard is no more that 10% of any tree species

Tree planting must fill the vacant tree sites and targeted replacements must improve the diversity.

Tree Size Class Distribution



Size class distribution of a healthy urban forest should be a bell curve.

The Tree Size Class Distribution takes a generation to change and therefore must be monitored.

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Pruning

- Pruning cycle started in 2021
- City staff decreased from 4 employees to 3 in 2020 and to 1 in 2024, there are 3 employees in 2025

Outsourcing was necessary to initiate the program but, in-house pruning results in better quality.

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Planting

- Ash tree removal and new species replacement is by outside contractors. This program expires in approximately 7 to 10 years.
- Staffing restrictions and storm cleanup limited planting time in 2022 and 2023.

Planting can be done by either contract or in-house employees but, in-house is preferred for quality

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Removals

- More contract work done because of losing city staff
- Number of tree removals has stayed somewhat consistent

Removals can be effectively outsourced because it is easy to quantify a bid and the quality is not diminished.

State / County Tree Management

Some of the most high-profile tree lined streets in University City are not maintained by our Forestry Division because they are the responsibility of the County. These 519 trees equates to 7.6% of the street trees in U City.

The county prunes only on request, they remove when needed and do not replace trees. Trees are distributed as follows:

- Delmar – 230
- Hanley – 64
- Midland – 158
- North and South, McKnight, Pennsylvania and Vernon – 67

University City needs to take the responsibility for managing these trees in order to ensure good husbandry of this significant asset.

New planting areas are being considered

Flood prone areas as designated by the City

Wilson avenue will be the site for Arbor Day planting in April 2026

The Forestry Commission will work with Green Practices to determine if trees should be planted in areas they have identified as “heat islands”

The Commission recommends funding sources be identified to undertake a heat island study.

Resident Communication

Canopy coverage is a collaborative effort between the city and the residents. The Commission has formed a sub-committee which has completed significant work on goals

- 15 topics have been identified
- Communication methods such as print media, social media and community communications have been identified
- Collaboration has begun between the Forestry Commission, Parks and Green Practices.

Importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Our summary evaluation is that insufficient resources have been allocated to grow our Forestry Division staff and to equip this staff to meet the goals defined by our KPIs.

Trees are a major value asset for University City and we have been taking them for granted. Planting and pruning are the best way to maintain this valuable asset. Trees take a long time to grow but can be lost more quickly if proper husbandry is not a habit.

The KPIs are designed to provide year to year consistent reporting to measure the health of our tree eco-system. As the concerns grow about climate change more investment in the Urban Forest is required.

Ongoing measurement will track the performance of our goals.

Major Issues Identified

A. Forestry staff consists of 2 persons in the field; often this is not sufficient to support needed maintenance let alone improvement of our KPIs
B. Forestry equipment is old and needs updating.
C. There are 795 planting sites where trees have been removed and have not been replaced. There were 462 planting sites in 2023.
D. There are 519 State / County street trees within U City that are not managed except for removal and storm damage clean up.
E. Outreach to the community regarding the community has begun and we intend to increase it in the coming year.
F. Current Storm Cleanup Policy for a major storms detracts from Forestry's daily mission.

The Forestry Commission recommends the City Council investigate possible funding sources to improve the Urban Forest of University City.

Forestry Commission Report 2025

Appendix

- Important Definitions
- Established Industry Standards

Important Definitions

- City of University City Tree Ordinance: University City Ordinance 6670
- City of University City Tree Manual: A companion to the Ordinance to aid in education
- Urban Forest: The care and management of single trees and populations in urban environments
- Canopy Coverage: The measurement of ground surface covered by the branch spread of trees
- Heat Islands: Infrastructure that absorbs the suns heat and reemits it into the atmosphere
- Standards: Established Goals for Urban Forests
- Key Performance Indicators: Methods of measurement of Goal achievement
- Tree Types
  - Street Tree: A tree located on the City right of way along a public street
  - Privately Owned trees: A tree located on private property and is not a City tree
  - Park Trees: Trees located in parks
  - Ruth Woods Trees: Trees located in Ruth Woods which are not generally maintained by Forestry
- Diameter at Breast Height: The size of a tree measured at 4.5 feet from the soil level
- New Planting Areas: Places where trees could be planted but, have not been inventoried
- Vacant Sites: Site used to have a tree but, it was removed and not replaced
- In-House Work: Work performed by University City Staff (or Volunteers)
- Contracted Work: Work performed by contractors hired by University City Forestry

Established Industry Standards

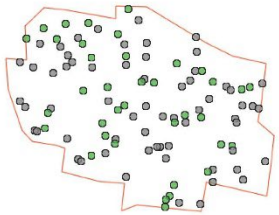
- Canopy Coverage-Previously set at 40% by United States Forest Service-Currently percent is set by the entity managing the urban forest
- Tree Species Diversity- Santamour 1990 no species should exceed 10%
- Pruning Cycle-Every 3-8 years based on when trees need structural pruning and deadwooding

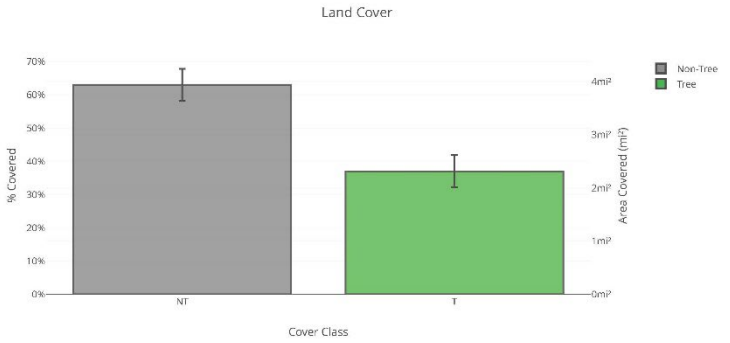
I-Tree Canopy

i-Tree Canopy Report

i-Tree Benefits and Cover Assessment

Estimated using random sampling statistics on 12/8/2025





I-Tree Canopy

Abbr.	Cover Class	Description	Points	% Cover ± SE	Area (mi²) ± SE
NT	Non-Tree	All other surfaces	63	63.00 ± 4.83	3.94 ± 0.30
T	Tree	Tree, non-shrub	37	37.00 ± 4.83	2.32 ± 0.30
Total			**100**	**100.00**	**6.26**

Tree Benefit Estimates: Carbon (English units)

Description	Carbon (oz)	±SE	CO_2 Equiv. (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
Sequestered annually in trees	0.00	±0.00	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
Stored in trees (Note: this benefit is not an annual rate)	1,632,151,345.39	±212,975,594.91	5,984,554,933.11	±780,910,514.67	$0	±0

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Amount sequestered is based on 0.000 oz of Carbon, or 0.000 oz of CO_2, per mi²/yr and rounded. Amount stored is based on 704563331.072 oz of Carbon, or 2583398880.598 oz of CO_2, per mi² and rounded. Value (USD) is based on $0.00/oz of Carbon, or $0.00/oz of CO_2 and rounded. (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Air Pollution (English units)

Abbr.	Description	Amount (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
CO	Carbon Monoxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
NO2	Nitrogen Dioxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
O3	Ozone removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
SO2	Sulfur Dioxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
PM2.5	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
PM10*	Particulate Matter greater than 2.5 microns and less than 10 microns removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
Total		**0.00**	**±0.00**	**$0**	**±0**

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Air Pollution Estimates are based on these values in oz/mi²/yr @ $/oz/yr and rounded:
CO 0.000 @ $0.00 | NO2 0.000 @ $0.00 | O3 0.000 @ $0.00 | SO2 0.000 @ $0.00 | PM2.5 0.000 @ $0.00 | PM10* 0.000 @ $0.00 (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Hydrological (English units)

Abbr.	Benefit	Amount (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
AVRO	Avoided Runoff	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
E	Evaporation	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
I	Interception	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
T	Transpiration	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
PE	Potential Evaporation	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
PET	Potential Evapotranspiration	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Hydrological Estimates are based on these values in oz/mi²/yr @ $/oz/yr and rounded:
AVRO 0.000 @ $0.00 | E 0.000 @ N/A | I 0.000 @ N/A | T 0.000 @ N/A | PE 0.000 @ N/A | PET 0.000 @ N/A (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

About i-Tree Canopy

The concept and prototype of this program were developed by David J. Nowak, Jeffery T. Walton, and Eric J. Greenfield (USDA Forest Service). The current version of this program was developed and adapted to i-Tree by David Ellingsworth, Mike Binkley, and Scott Maco (The Davey Tree Expert Company)

Limitations of i-Tree Canopy

The accuracy of the analysis depends upon the ability of the user to correctly classify each point into its correct class. As the number of points increase, the precision of the estimate will increase as the standard error of the estimate will decrease. If too few points are classified, the standard error will be too high to have any real certainty of the estimate.